

by creating jobs and generating revenues for the Palmetto State, but his efforts to benefit our home state went far beyond what he was able to accomplish as a businessman. Buck was a tireless and enthusiastic advocate for education, and served as a life trustee of both my alma mater Clemson University, and of Converse College, as well as on the boards of the Georgia Institute of Technology, Furman University, Presbyterian College, and Wofford College. Furthermore, he was a member of the Advisory Boards of the South Carolina Foundation of Independent Colleges, the University of South Carolina Business School, and the National Advisory Council. His efforts to promote higher education in South Carolina not only earned him the respect and admiration of citizens, educators, and government officials, but helped to create a better education system in the Palmetto State.

Buck's sense of service certainly must have been instilled in him at a very young age as he served in the United States Merchant Marine during World War II, and then in the Army during the Korean War. This desire to contribute continued throughout his life and manifested itself in many ways, including his commitment to education, and through his philanthropic actions, both as a private citizen and as the Chairman of the Daniel/Mickel Foundation.

On a more personal note, Buck was a devoted friend and supporter who was always ready to help me however he could. He served as an officer on several of my re-election campaigns and played an important role in helping to get the Strom Thurmond Institute built at Clemson University.

Mr. President, it is never easy to summarize the accomplishments of a man such as Buck Mickel who has given so much of himself and achieved so much. That he passed at such a young age only compounds the sadness all who knew him feel at his death, but we all take consolation in the fact that he leaves behind an enviable record of successes as a businessman and of helping others. My condolences go out to his widow, Minor Herndon Mickel; their children Minor Shaw, Buck, and Charles; as well as their five grandchildren. They can be proud of the work their husband, father, and grandfather did, as well as the reputation he leaves behind.

#### MAJOR PRESTON JOHNSON

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, even those who possess essentially no knowledge of military affairs or military history understand the significance of the green beret worn by those who serve in the United States Army Special Forces, as well as what that headgear indicates about the soldier wearing it.

Established in the early days of the cold war, the Green Berets were intended to be a versatile, unconven-

tional force that could do everything from serve as instructors and advisors to carryout both humanitarian and direct action missions. Over the past almost fifty years, those who have served in the Special Forces have established a well deserved and well respected reputation for bravery, dedication to duty, and patriotism. There is ample reason that so many people, not only in the United States but throughout the world, know just how special an individual the man who wears the Green Beret is. Today, I rise to pay tribute to one of those men. Major Preston Johnson, who has left his assignment at the Special Operations Command Office of Legislative Affairs to attend the Marine Corps Command and General Staff College.

Major Johnson began his military career the tough way, by enlisting in the United States Army following his 1985 graduation from Rice University. His ability and leadership skills were obviously apparent from his early days in the Army as a recruit going through basic training, as he was selected to attend Officer Candidate School. A little more than one year after graduating from basic training, Preston Johnson pinned on the gold bar of a Second Lieutenant and the crossed rifles brass of the Infantry and began what has been a career dedicated to not only the Army, but to special operations.

Over the past thirteen years Preston Johnson has accumulated a resume of impeccable credentials in Army special operations. He began his career as an Infantryman in the 3rd Ranger Battalion, in Fort Benning, Georgia, and continued it after OCS as both a Rifle Platoon Leader and Long Range Reconnaissance Platoon leader in Fort Lewis, Washington where he served with the 2nd Battalion/47th Infantry and the 1st Squadron/9th US Cavalry. The Rangers are well known for their toughness, expertise in small unit tactics, and for an impressive record in battle. Certainly, the lessons Preston Johnson learned when he wore the black beret of the Regiment served him well not only as an Infantryman in the deep woods of Fort Lewis, but when he volunteered for Special Forces training in 1990 and in the years he has served in the Green Berets as well.

Over the past eight-years Preston Johnson has held a number of assignments in the Special Forces that have led him around the world and have included serving as: Detachment Commander of Special Forces Operational Detachment A-363 in the 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne); Company Commander of the Special Forces Selection and Assessment Company; Aide-de-Camp to Major General William Garrison, the Commanding General of the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School; and as the Battalion Operations Officer of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne). Additionally, he has earned recognitions that reflect that Major Johnson is truly a member of

one of the nation's most elite military forces.

Of course, many of us know him from his last assignment with the Special Operations Command Office of Legislative Affairs, where he has worked hard, especially with members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, to assist us with our efforts to create a military force capable of meeting the security challenges of the post-Cold War era. If we are going to protect the citizens, borders, and interests of our nation, we must be prepared to counter possible threats that include nuclear, biological and chemical warfare; ethnic warfare; intranational warfare; and, regional conflicts. Furthermore, we must build strong bilateral ties with the militaries of other nations, and there is no question that we will have to rely increasingly upon those who serve in special operations units to meet these goals. The skills and unique capabilities the special operations community possess will be invaluable in ensuring that the United States enjoys peace and stability into the 21st Century.

On almost every continent around the world, members of the United States Special Operations Command are carrying out missions that help to protect American security and vital national interests. They operate in a world that requires that they rarely acknowledge their purpose, and they almost never receive credit for a job well done. Recognition, however, is not what motivates these "quiet professionals", and we are indeed fortunate to have such selfless individuals who are willing to serve our nation and make the sacrifices they do. Major Johnson is an excellent example of the caliber of individual who volunteers for a career in special operations. He has represented the Special Operations Command well on Capitol Hill and I have every confidence that he will continue to distinguish himself in the years to come.

#### NATIONAL AIRBORNE DAY

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, a few hundred miles south of here, stands Fort Bragg, a sprawling military installation that is the home of the 82nd Airborne Division, and where thousands of paratroopers are ready to go anywhere in the world, "stand in the door", and jump into harm's way in order to protect the national security and vital interests of the United States. Today, I am pleased to remind my colleagues that August 16, 1998 has been designated "National Airborne Day" as a way to honor all those who have worn the winged parachute badge on their uniform.

Though the concept of using airborne troops in warfare is only a little more than fifty years old, the versatility and effectiveness of these forces is above question. In particular, "America's Guard of Honor", the 82nd Airborne Division, has established an especially proud record over the past five decades.